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POPULATION TREND AND GROWTH OF URBANIZATION IN HUNGARY

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Since 1945, there has been insufficient information on the development of Hungary's population. The results of the only postwar census of 31 December 1946 & January 1949 were published in summarized form only. In addition, only limited individual regional information could be obtained from monographs. The official statistical periodical Statistikai Szemle, in its first two issues of 1955 published two basic compilations, one on the development of the population of Hungary and another on the provisional results of the household census of 1 July 1954. The 1954 census was held in cities and larger communities, and these data permit a closer insight into the development of the population of Hungary. At the same time, it is especially significant to point out that the data are as of 1954, because the final date of the last census was too close to the end of the war, to show an unbiased development trend. The following table shows the over-all population trend and the density of the population for the entire area of Hungary. It is figured for the present territory of the country and includes the census results of 1930 and 1941.

Development of the Population Figures and Density
of Population of Hungary During 1930-1954

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population Figures</u>	<u>Density (per sq km)</u>
1930	8,685,109	93.3
1941	9,315,074*	100.2
1948	9,204,799*	99.0
1949	9,284,000	99.9
1950	9,378,000	100.8
1951	9,459,000	101.7
1952	9,537,000	102.5
1953	9,652,000	103.5
1954	9,750,000	104.8
1955, 30 Jun **	9,828,000	105.4

*These figures vary slightly from the last reported figures; the variation may be due to the usual difference between provisional and final census data.

**According to Budapest, Szabad Nép, of 13 September 1955

These figures show that the population of Hungary during the period 1930-1940 had an annual increase of an average 50,000-60,000 persons. The war caused a population decrease up to 1950, but since that time, the number has increased steadily till in 1955-1954 it amounted to 119,000. Considering an annual natural increase of a minimum of 100,000, which can be taken for granted, the population of Hungary during 1957 will exceed the 10 million mark; the density will be about 107.5 persons per square kilometer and in another 5 years will probably reach 110. A better picture of the rapid population increase is given by the following comparison of the population movement figures for the past years:

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Marriages</u>	<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Natural Increase</u>
1938	74,276	182,206	130,628	51,578
1945	73,272	160,091	211,323	-42,232*
1946	98,662	169,120	135,486	33,634
1947	98,328	187,316	117,537	69,779
1948	97,710	191,907	105,780	86,127
1949	107,820	190,398	105,718	84,680
1950	106,261	195,567	106,902	88,665
1951	93,362	190,645	109,998	80,647
1952	104,836	185,820	107,443	78,377
1953	91,621	206,926	112,039	94,887
1954	107,500 (approx)	223,000	107,000	116,000

*Not including military dead

Figures showing the percentage of development indicate the following trends: the stagnation (caused by the war) of the number of marriages, the birth decline, and great increase in mortality, totaling a minus balance of more than 42,000 persons, in 1945, is followed by an increase of marriages, the same birth figure and a still high mortality rate, in 1946. In 1947, however, the low point is passed; although the number of marriages remains at the same level as the high figure in 1946, the 1947 birth figure exceeds that of 1938, and the 1947 mortality figure is lower than in 1938, indicating a gain in both cases. This trend lasts, as indicated above, until 1950 when the positive development of the population statistics reach the prewar figure. The critical periods of the systematized economy can be observed easily in the population statistics: in 1951, there is an over-all decline, marking the crisis which caused the so-called "new course"; later on there is also a large decline of marriages in 1953; however, there is no decline in birth and increase figures. In any case the average annual natural increase of the population of Hungary amounts to 12 per 1,000 as of the latest date and occupies the first place only after Iceland, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, and Portugal.

The large population increase and the large decline in the mortality rate was caused by improved sociological conditions, which led to a very large decline in infant mortality, on the one hand, and to an eagerness to bear children in view of protection period, bonuses, and nursing subsidy for mothers, etc, on the other hand. It is reported that in 1954 four times as many maternity benefits were granted as in 1949 and that in the course of the Five-Year Plan the bed capacity in the gynecological departments of the hospitals increased by 30 percent, and in the maternity homes by 70 percent. It is also reported that the tuberculosis death rate of 14 per 10,000 in 1938 decreased to .5 per 10,000 in 1954. The 1954 total mortality figure is more than 20 percent lower than the one in 1938 and is on the same level with the average standard of all highly civilized states in Central and Western Europe.

The following table clearly indicates a trend of increasing urbanization in the past years. It gives a breakdown in percentage of Hungary's total population in the years indicated*:

Increasing Urbanization in Hungary 1869-1954 (%)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budapest</u>	<u>Urban Areas</u>	<u>Rural Areas</u>
1869	1.8	11.5	86.7
1900	3.0	13.4	82.5
1920	11.5	19.4	69
1941*	12.5	23.7	63.8
1941**	18.4	19.8	61.8
1949	17.3	19.2	63.5
1954 1 July	about 19.0	about 21.0	about 60.0

*Figures refer to the territorial boundaries existing in that particular year: i.e., prior to 1918 the boundaries of prewar Hungary, after that of Trianon-Hungary, in 1941 that of 1938-1941 enlarged territory of Hungary.

**These figures refer to a Hungary within the frame of boundaries established after World War II.

The above figures indicate that the urbanization trend has been in process already for 100 years. The July 1954 household census, which was held only in the 168 largest localities in the country, does not give a complete picture; however, it does illustrate the rapid development of urbanization which occurred after the consolidation of the systematized economic regime.

The following table compares 1954 census temporary results with 1949:

Development of Population of the 168 Largest Localities
in Hungary During 1949 and 1954

<u>Localities</u>	<u>1949 (1 Nov)</u>	<u>1954 (1 Jul)</u>	<u>Increase Over 1949</u>
Budapest	1,612,287	1,781,085	168,798
Remaining 61 cities	1,782,216	1,942,111	159,895
106 largest communities	678,999	718,892	39,893
Total	4,073,502	4,442,088	368,586

Naturally, the population increased the fastest in those cities where large industrial centers were established. The 1949 census could not show this trend clearly because of the short industrialization period, but the 1954 figures definitely indicate this development.

The following table shows population trends in the most important rapidly growing industrial centers:

**Development of the Population of the Most Important
Industrial Centers of Hungary from 1900 to 1954**

<u>City</u>	<u>Population Figures</u>				<u>Increase in Percentage (1900 as 100)</u>
	<u>1900</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1954</u>	
Kazincbarcika	3,137	3,773	5,059	11,819	376.8
Komlo	988	2,187	4,605	17,540	1,775.3
Miskolc	61,214	93,912	109,146	135,780	221.8
Oroszlany	1,633	1,473	3,746	7,150	437.8
Sztalinvaros	3,826	3,905	4,069	27,472	718.0
Tata	12,180	12,002	13,199	16,223	133.2
Varpalota	6,432	6,696	11,065	15,970	248.3
Veszprem	14,114	17,792	18,229	22,640	160.4
Zalaegerszeg	9,782	13,072	15,159	16,900	172.8

The above table shows that the 1949 census fails to indicate a development trend (because 1949 was too close to post war), but it does show that the principal increase centers are those places where the greatly developed industries are concentrated. Apart from the population influx to the national capital, the mining center of Komlo takes the leading place. The Komlo mining center is followed by Sztalinvaros, the newly erected Socialist model city with the developing foundries; Oroszlany and Tata, the centers of bauxite extraction; Miskolc and Kazincbarcika, the aspiring centers of the northern industrial regions; Veszprem as the new center of the chemical industry; Varpalota also as a center of the chemical industry; and finally Zalaegerszeg in connection with petroleum exploitation in the southwestern part of Hungary.

An interesting example of population trends is shown by the following table which gives the population figures of several country towns in eastern Hungary that have been touched by the industrialization wave:

<u>Town</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>Decrease or Increase</u>
			<u>Over 1949 (%)</u>
Gaongrad	24,855	23,297	-6.3
Mako	34,170	30,908	-9.5
Szentes	31,254	32,032	+2.5

Further verification of population concentration in industrial centers is shown by the following table which gives housing construction statistics for 1949 and 1954:

	<u>1949</u>	<u>1954</u>
Budapest	130,677	140,231
Other towns	328,221	333,066
In 106 large communities	147,886	151,103

The following table shows the increase of housing units from 1949 to 1954 in certain Hungarian cities.

Sztalinvaros	3,541
Miskolc	2,823
Komlo	1,979
Tatabanya	1,448
Gyor	1,372
Ozd	1,035
Szekesfehervar	920
Szolnok	882
Ajka	883
Lorinci	673
Szigetszentmiklos	625

Besides the already known industrial centers, there are also a number of middle-sized towns like Gyor, Szekesfehervar, and Szolnok in the leading places. Among the industrial localities, Ajka is worth mentioning in connection with the Veszprem-Vandakota center in the southwestern central chains of mountains. As a whole, the above figures indicate that also in Hungary population tends to increase in cities, especially in those where industry is being established or expanded. It is also worth mentioning, that the population increase in Hungary has reached a very high level and surpasses that of most Central European States except Yugoslavia.

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